

# Proclamations and Resolutions

Before saying, “Oh, that’s too much work and I don’t have any idea how to write a proclamation or resolution,” try this approach. “I’ve never worked with proclamations or resolutions and I don’t know bananas about them, but if it’s going to help save lives on the lake and if it’s not too hard ... I’ll give it a try.” Now you’re getting that positive lifesaving attitude.

Easy, my, my, proclamations and resolutions are as easy as breathing. They are win-win situations. The person issuing the certificates — the mayor, county executive, governor — recognized as honoring a person or cause and the receiving agency (the Corps of Engineers, in this case) is looked upon as a caring, concerned government entity.

Other organizations present these documents, such as civic, fraternal or developing associations like the Tennessee River Valley Association or Tennessee-Cumberland Waterways Council. They will be happy to assist you.

These two certificates are nicknamed the “Whereas Documents,” because the paragraphs start with “whereas.” Politicians love to give them out because the signing makes them look good, the agency is happy, and many times the media covers the signing.

When should you try to get the mayor to proclaim such-and-such Water Safety Day? It is possible to get a day, week, month or even an entire summer declared “Water Safety (whatever).” A good time to start is about 30 to 45 days before the event. Let’s say you want the county executive to proclaim June as “Water Safety Month.”

Give the official’s secretary a buzz and see if anyone else has requested June. If it’s taken, try July, and soon.

If the months have already been spoken for, try National Safe Boating Week which is the week before Memorial Day Weekend. During this week, boating safety is promoted with the help of the media and lake programs.

After making contact with the secretary, you will be asked to bring in some background information to go on the proclamation or resolution. The certificates are already printed. They are “fill-in-the-blank” type documents. Probably 99 percent read the same, just the person or cause is changed and the verbiage. If you have never seen one, go by the mayor’s office and they will gladly give you a few samples. You may be required to draft the words for the certificate. Here’s where the District PAO will provide some assistance. Once you’ve received a proclamation or resolution, keep it on file so the next time you will be able to write the draft and help the politician’s administrator even more.

Now that you’ve received your first proclamation and see how easy it is to obtain, and the publicity your water safety campaign received, you might want to give this project more time and effort.

In this case, call each city mayor and county executive/judge surrounding the lake. Check to see if the elected official will present these documents. If the staffer says “yes,” then check on what days, weeks, or months are available. Ask the person to “pencil in” your water safety campaign for one of the three on such-and-such a date. The first time this is done, you might want to take the draft to the

office, probably the next year mailing the copy will be sufficient Now, move onto the next town or city until your list is complete.

Who is going to accept the citation? The resource manager is an excellent choice. Maybe the Natural Resources Branch Manager will be coming to the lake about that time and the District Office person will receive it. How about the Operations & Readiness Division Chief, or the Deputy District Engineer or the District Engineer?

If you can make two or three stops in a day, you might be able to get someone from District easier. The first key to success is the document. Secondly, and most important, is media coverage. The document itself is good, but only a few folks will be benefited from it unless the word is spread with the help of the media. Do you have the "Proclamation Fever?" How about really getting hot with this project? Here's an example of how to send the mercury soaring through the glass top of a thermometer. Plan the entire day or two around the signings. It will be necessary to create an agenda. Here's a helpful hypothetical "signing" day:

0800 — At College Station City Hall, Mayor Tex King signs the proclamation on Thursday before Memorial Day weekend. Shortly after the signing, the media might want additional interviews; set up another photo angle of the signing. Stop on the way out of town at Radio Station KTAM for an interview with morning talk show hostesses Roberta and Lee Aggie.

0930 -- Lansing City County Executive the television station and will have the evening news crew at his office for the signing.

1200 — Doylesville's Mayor Howie Boatsix has received approval to have local Radio Station WORN to do a remote broadcast and the *White County Times* said they will send reporter Razor Sharp to cover the signing. Sharp is also writing a story about the entire lake's water safety campaign.

1430 — Governor Gloria Redjacket will autograph the proclamation in the Governor's office in Capitalburg, with more cameras than you can count.

1600 — Corps officials are scheduled to appear on a taped public affairs TV program on Channel 43, WRVN, in Danangburg with host fast-talking Edward Marshall.

1800 -- Just down the road in Murfreesville, KPF radio personality Americus Naomi will interview both Corps employees about the day's events and the intensified water safety summer campaign, on a call-in show.

1930 -- In Puckettville, meet with the local Public Broadcast Station outdoor TV show host Davie Dow, who will video the first signing in the morning, but wants the senior Corps official to appear in the PBS studios, too.

"Wow, that's going to take a tremendous amount of planning," you're saying. Yes, but just in case you really want to get the proclamation you have the remedy to cure your "ailment." Remember to take still photographs and possibly get a Corps Visual Information videographer to "shoot" each event. A TV station might not come to the signing, but will use the Corps' video on a later show.

Again, a few elected officials are not media oriented; therefore, the coverage arrangements could fall into your lap. Once the signing dates and times have been approved, make your coverage calls. Always coordinate with the local signing admin office before making the media contacts. If the local signing office folks will get the media to the event, great, you have more than enough calls to make.

Which official is first on your list? Whose little boy or girl is going to accompany you to a signing, with a life jacket? Maybe, the local Junior Miss could be on hand at another signing. Or, how about the valedictorian of the high school at another? Or, how about the town's football hero? Or, how about the Spelling Bee champion? Or, best of all, the person who saved someone from drowning at the lake might be at still another signing.

Which local person have you selected to view the signing? This person will help bring the media. Did you say a celebrity lives at a lakeshore cottage? That person, or the spouse and/or child, will draw the media, too.

Good luck.